

A
S E R M O N

Design'd for the FUNERAL of

Ed. Wiseman Esq.

Late of *East-Lockinge* in the

County of B E R K S.

Who was Buried at *Stevinton* near *Abingdon*
November the Ninth, 1694.

By WILL. SEVILL, *Master of Arts,*
And
Fellow of C. C. C. OXFORD.

Published at the Request of many Gentlemen of B E R K S.

Printed for *John Wilmot,* and *John Howell* Booksellers
in O X F O R D, 1694.

1877. 1. 31.

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TO THE
DESERVEDLY HONOURED
M^{rs} Mary Wiseman,
RELICT of
Edm. Wiseman Esq.
D E C E A S E D.

M A D A M,

TH^O I am conscious to my self, that this Discourse appears in publick with far greater Disadvantages, than many other do; a great part of it having been hastily wrote in a tumultuous hurry of Thoughts, and some disorder of Passion, upon the Death of my much Esteemed FRIEND: Yet in honour to His Memory, and in compliance with the Requests of many of those worthy Gentlemen who attended His Funeral, and more especially for Your Satisfaction; I have so far prevail'd upon my self, as to dis-regard the Censures that may be pass'd upon it. If it should be thought by some, not worthy the Reading of many,
A whose

The Epistle Dedicatory.

whose hands it may now fall into; I shall leave Those, whom I much respect, to make their Promised Apology: That the Will of the Dead could not any way be better fulfill'd, than by Publishing that, which by Monsieur De l'Angle was deny'd to be preach'd.

*A sort of French Civility, which I was, till now, as little Acquainted with, as I desire to be with their Government, or Religion. So far as I can learn, 'twas never practis'd amongst Englishmen; and I am sure in the mildest Construction that can be made of it, it must be term'd a most Unseasonable, Ungrateful, and Indiscreet piece of Rudeness. Most Unseasonable certainly at His Funeral, who always Pursued the Things that made for Peace and Love, for Meekness and Charity, for Hospitality and good Neighbourhood: Most Ungrateful to Him, who whilst he was living, had Obligated the Gentleman by several eminent Acts of special Favours and Kindnesses: And most Indiscreet, in respect of the poor French-Protestants, whose calamitous Condition hath been, by the compassionate Care of Their MAJESTIES, frequently and lately Recommended to the Charity of the whole Nation. So that, if Monsieur De l'Angle had no Regard to the Gentlemen of Berks, yet Pity to his own Countrymen might have moved him, at that time, to abate his Resentment of those words, that an Honourable Member of Parliament, and some
Others*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Others upon just Provocation had given him, when he refused to Comply with their Request, under Pretence that he had not been treated as a Gentleman; because no particular Messenger had been sent unto him. In the Dispute I know he told them, That I of All Men should not have his Pulpit; but for what Reason, he was not bound to satisfy any Man, nor would he declare. I remember very well, when he stood for his Degrees, I was very Industrious to Oppose his Letter of Petition, because I thought his Request very Unreasonable, and Himself Unqualify'd for them. If this were the Reason, (as Some guess'd it to be) and he were sordidly inclined to seek Revenge; He might have took some other Opportunity for it, which would have render'd him less Ridiculous and Odious to Mankind, than this his late Behaviour has done. If that were not the Reason, but (as Others rather Conjectur'd) he were Bias'd by a Party to espouse a Quarrel: They may know that it was One of the worst Hands that was ever employ'd to Defend their Honourable Cause: and I believe he Himself will be Convinc'd, (if he be not already) that he ought to be better Rewarded, than I have been for more Civil services. However Many besides myself have learnt that there are Some, Who, notwithstanding all their Boasts of Gentility, have little Reputation to Lose, and less Modesty to be Tender of.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

I humbly beg Your Pardon, GOOD MADAM, for making mention of this Matter, which, I fear, doth revive and encrease Your Sorrow: But it could not be conceal'd without manifest Injustice to those Many Worthy Gentlemen, who were so extremely affronted, whilst they were paying their last Respects to Your Late Most Affectionate HUSBAND; as well as to My Self, who could not without Great Indecency, decline the Publication of this Sermon, and the Occasion of its Coming forth. Such as it is, I most humbly present it to Your Perusal; beseeching ALMIGHTY GOD, Who comforts those that are cast down, to support You under this sad Stroke of His Providence, so to Bless You, as to make All things work together for Your Good, and to fill You with all Joy and Peace in Believing; till at last You are received into the number of the Blessed, and made Partaker, with them, of Pleasures for evermore. Which is, and shall be the constant Prayer of,

MADAM,

Your Most Faithful,
Most Oblig'd, and
Most Respectful Servant,

WILL. SEVILL.

A Sermon, &c.

REV. Chap. XIV. Ver. XIII.

I heard a Voice from Heaven, Saying unto Me, Write; Blessed are the Dead, that dye in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit; that they may Rest from their Labours, and their Works follow them.

WERE we acted by nothing but the meer Impulse of our lapsed Nature, Death, in its best Representation, would be always thought *the King of Terrours*: for tho' the Embraces of our Mother Earth within her, will certainly free us from all the Labours of our Life upon her, so as to make *the weary* in her Bosome to *lye at Rest*; yet *to Dust thou shalt return*, in its finest Colours, would still be lookt upon, as an ill-favour'd, and heavy Curse to us, whose fleshly Constitu-

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tions

tions put us always upon Desires after a longer Continuance here; and are therefore still apt to be much affrighted when they think, that

Ch. 17. *Corruption* is their *Father*, (as *Job* speaks)
v. 14. and that the *Worm* is their *Mother*, and their *Sister*.

Nay, what is more, tho' by the Innocency of our Lives, we enjoy *the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness at the last*; so as upon our Death-beds we can say, with good *Hezekiah*,
Isa. 38. *Remember, O Lord, how I have walked be-*
ver. 3. *fore thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which is Good in thy sight*; yet when this Summons of Death comes,
Ver. 1. *Set thy House in order; for thou shalt Dye and not Live*; with him we many times turn
Ver. 2, 3. *toward the Wall, and weep sore*; and with good *David*, *Water our Couch with our*
Psa. 39. *Tears*; when we imagine we shall go hence, *and be no more seen*; and therefore pray to be *spared a little, that we may recover our Strength*.

And thus the Apprehensions of our Approaching Departure, being a Subject always terrible to all Men in their *Natural*, and for the most part a *Sorrowful* one to many, in a *Righteous* State; As a Voice of old bade the Prophet *Isaiah* to cry, *All Flesh is Grass, and*

and all the Goodliness thereof, as the Flower of the Field; thereby to denote the Importance of the thing; that a frequent Premeditation of it is a part of the greatest Wisdom, and the best means to conquer the Suggestions of Nature, and to stir us up to the performance of Good Works, *whilst it is call'd to day*: So for the same ends, and more especially to comfort the Souls of the Righteous; A like Voice to that, was heard in these latter times from Heaven, to bid St. John, in the words now handled, not to cry, but to *write*; Cry not to the Inhabitants of the Earth at present; but *write*, Record it to all Ages of the World: and what is thus to be written, or recorded by virtue of this Charge from on high? *Blessed are the Dead that dye in the Lord, from henceforth: Tea, saith the Spirit; for they rest from their Labours, and their Works follow them.*

Blessed are the Dead that dye in the Lord. By which Persons so pronounced Blessed, I know that * some Interpreters have understood here, in a proper Sence, only Those,

* *Qui Christi causa mortis pericula adeunt.* Saith Grotius upon the Place, and Translates οἱ ὑπὸ κυρίου ἀποθνήσκοντες, *Qui propter Dominum vel Domini causa moriuntur.* As also Beza, Junius, and Others.

that have Sacrificed their Lives to seal the Truth of their Religion with their Blood ; or, Those that have laid them down for Christ's Name-sake, or their Faith in him : and that, by reason of some preceding part of this Chapter, which speaks of a Vision, wherein a Third Angel was seen, and heard
 Ver. 9, *to say with a loud Voice, If any Man Worship*
 10. *the Beast, and his Image, the same shall drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God ;* and afterwards, *Here is the Patience of the Saints :*
 Ver. 12. Intimating, as they would have it, that the sole intent of the Spirit, in these words, was to clear up the Hearts of the Primitive Professors of Christianity, so as to make them to bid Defiance to those Persecutions, which the Rage of the prejudiced World, and the Madness of the Idolatrous Heathen were then bringing in upon them ; and in order to that to tell them, that the Persons so *Dying in the Lord*, were those that are now pronounced Blessed.

Yea, Blessed, for ever Blessed, if God be true, are such ; but that these are not the only Persons here meant, is evident from the Character given of them, in the words immediately before my Text ; *Here are they that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith*

Faith of Jesus ; which no sooner was proclaim'd by the Angel, but the Voice is directed to St. John, *Saying, write, Blessed are the dead, that dye in the Lord* ; that is, according to the Connexion, those that dye in the LORD, as having kept the Commandments of GOD, and the Faith of JESUS : so that, as long as the sence of these words may properly be extended farther than *Martyrs*, * to all true Disciples of our Blessed Saviour ; who, by whatever Death they fall, have sincerely endeavour'd to keep the Commandments of GOD ; upon their Failure been truly penitent ; and by a lively Faith, in the Merits and Satisfaction of our Saviour's Sufferings, commended themselves to His Mercy : They may pertinently, and profitably be discoursed upon, at this Solemnity, whilst we are paying our last Office to this our late *Dearly-beloved, and much-esteemed BROTHER* ; Whose sincere and hearty Repentance, Whose constant Piety, and fervent Devotion, and Whose chearful Resignation of Himself to GOD's Disposall (of all which I

* *Sicut in Christo esse dicuntur, qui ei verâ fide constanter adhaerent ; & in Christo vivere, qui vivunt ad voluntatem Christi ; ita in Domino mori dicuntur, qui in vera fide, & invocatione Domini, per fidem Christo insiti, ut vera membra corporis ejus moriuntur.*
 Par. Cluv. Gat.

was a daily Witness) gives me confidence to say, In every part He fulfilled the Character.

Be pleas'd then in them to consider these Particulars.

First, A Declaration of the Blessedness, or State of Happiness of All those *that dye in the Lord. Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord.*

Secondly, A full Assurance or Confirmation of it: *Yea, saith the Spirit.*

And lastly, A Twofold Reason, containing in it the Nature of that their Blessedness, or State of Happiness: *That they may, or rather, †for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them.*

But that my Discourse upon these Heads may be the more Clear, and Regular; I shall invert their Order, and begin with the last; (*viz.*) The Twofold Reason, containing in it the Nature of their Blessedness: And when we have seen, in some measure, what their State of Happiness is, I shall speak something very briefly, to the two first, (*viz.*) The Declaration, and Confirmation of it both together; that thereby we may be satisfy'd of the

† So we find *ἡ ἀνάπαυσις*, translated in our *Liturgy*.

full Assurance we have, that such shall be their Portion, *that dye in the Lord.*

And that what shall be deliver'd, may have such an Impression upon us, as to move us earnestly to endeavour to be found at the last of their number; I shall add something as an Application suitable to the present Occasion, and so conclude.

I begin then with the Nature of that Blessedness, that is said to be the Portion of those *that dye in the Lord*; contain'd in this, that *They rest from their labours, and their works follow them.*

Which evidently manifests this unto us, that the Nature of their Happiness consists,

First, *Negatively*, in a Cessation, or Freedom from all, or their not being tormented with any worldly labours, and troubles; and,

Secondly, *Positively*, in the Enjoyment of inconceivably great Rewards, consequent upon their good Works.

And first, *Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord*, inasmuch as they happily enjoy a Cessation, or freedom from all their worldly labors, and troubles: *They rest from their labours.*

And, indeed, so many are the laborious miseries of this vain world, that by reason of them, the *Thracians* of old wept at the Birth of those

those Children, who were ready to be brought under their Burden; and celebrated the Funerals of those, who by Death were freed from them with Musical Entertainments: and we *Christians*, according to the Rules of our *Church*, do now-a-days, with hearty Thankgivings to our *God*, *for that it hath pleased Him to deliver them from the miseries of this sinful world*: which is not a less Rational than a Religious Custom. For how sadly has Sin defaced our Souls, and made our Understandings become so short-sighted, that we cannot penetrate into the true Nature of many things: nay, nor scarce get a thorow Apprehension of some few necessary ones, without *much study*; which (as the *Wiseman* speaks) *is a weariness of the Flesh!* The corruptible Body presseth down the Soul, -----and with labour do we find out the things that are before us. How wretchedly by the same *Original sin* are our Wills corrupted, that when we seem to our selves most securely to stand, we are oblig'd of necessity continually to labour, lest we fall! forasmuch as we always find (in the *Apostle's* Language) *a law in our members, warring against the law of our minds, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin*. How miserably are our Bodies

Ecclef.

12. 12.

Wisd. 9.

15, 16.

Rom. 7.

23.

depriv'd of their primitive welfare, and how jarring and unfociable are all their parts ! so full are they of inward aches, and disturbing pains, that we are frequently compell'd to labour to preserve them in a Vital Amity, to keep them and our Souls from a dissolution : forasmuch as *in the midst of life we are in death*. And besides all this, How difficultly doth the Earth bring forth her Fruits, and with what labour do living Men enjoy them ! truly with so great pains, that, according to the curse of GOD upon it, we are forced to *Eat our bread in the sweat of our brows*. And how many are our other outward Crosses, our surprizing Losses, and thereby our great Disappointments ! Oftentimes truly so many, that *in patience to possess our Souls*, we find a very laborious task. And all these in their innumerable particulars, are so inseparably annex'd to the Life that now is, that * *Seneca an Heathen*, as well the Spirit of GOD, has compar'd our course upon Earth, to a Journey upon a Road ; in which the Traveller may as soon expect not to meet with rain, nor dirt, nor wind, nor dust ; as we in our Life may not to meet

* *Omnia ad quæ gemimus — tributa vitæ sunt — — in longa vita sunt, quomodo in longa via pulvis, & lutum, & pluvia.* Ep. 96.

with Labours, nor Crosses, nor Troubles. And if an *Heathen* could observe this of himself as a Man, and if in the same sence our sad Experience often-times confirms this to ourselves, that *We are born to sorrow, as the sparks fly upward*; that is, by a Natural necessity; to how far greater measure are our Labours augmented, who profess ourselves the *Souldiers* of CHRIST our *Captain*, as well as the *Servants* of Him our *Master*! who in our Baptismal Vow, have sworn by the Labours of a continual warfare, manfully to fight against the assaults of our Lusts, and the Wiles and Temptations of Devils: who in the midst of the Commotions of a mad World, are oblig'd to strive for Peace with all Men, to bear Persecutions when laid upon us for Righteousness-sake, and the like.

Whereas now the Dead *that dye in the Lord*, are not perplex'd with any of these, or the like troublesome tasks; but are freed from all their hardships, their tiresome journeyings, their tedious warfare, their fretting cares, their vexatious crosses, their grievous persecutions; and in a word, all other their worldly afflictions: which is in one Expression now spoken to, *They rest from their labours*. Yea, *they rest from their labours*.

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For certainly there is no striving after Knowledge, no Labour under Ignorance to them, who are made partakers of GODS Wisdom, and Glory in Heaven. No labour to them of preserving themselves in their state of Holiness, who, like those Angels that never sinned, are confirm'd in their station, and put out of a possibility of falling. No pains, no aches of Body to them, whose Bodies lye senceless in the dust, until the Resurrection, and at, and after that time are transform'd into, and remain glorify'd ones. No difficulty to them of supporting themselves with provisions, who perpetually are feasting upon the *Bread of Heaven*, being actual possessours of ineffable *pleasures at Gods right hand for evermore*. No surprizing losses, no vexing disappointments to them in that state, which GOD has made as unalterable as Himself is, who is *the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, and changeth not*. No labour against temptations to them, who lye not within the reach of any enemies, and whom neither lusts, nor Devils can assault. No strivings after peace to them, whose place hath known no wars, nor commotions, since the Devil and his Angels thence were beaten. And they of necessity must be freed

from persecutions; since they have *fought their Good Fight*, obtain'd their Victory by Faith, and are made Members of a Church eternally triumphant.

And this is the First Part of that Blessedness, *The Dead* enjoy, who *dye in the Lord*, *they rest from their labours*.

But alas! a meer resting from their labours, falls infinitely short of half their Happiness; as will be clearly manifested, now I come to treat of the Second positive part of their state, which was said to consist in the enjoyment of inconceivably great Rewards consequent upon their good works; contain'd in these words, *Their works follow them*.

GOD's gracious Rewards of their good works accompany them: Not that we are to think, that these their good works were the Meritorious cause of their enjoyment of them; so as by reason of them we may (with the *Romanists*) affirm that they deserv'd them; or in strict justice might have challeng'd them, as their due from GOD: but only that they were the necessary means appointed by GOD, for the obtainment of the Blessing, and being those without which they never would have had their joys. Joys, that no Man upon Earth can pretend to set forth in their pro

per colours; forasmuch as whatever pleasures there arise to our Rational Natures made perfect, from the Vision, and Fruition of that All-glorious Spirit, who is the incomprehensible Fountain of all perfection, and happiness; forasmuch as whatever pleasures there arise from the unspeakable harmony of Celestial *Hallelujahs*; from the society, and love of holy Angels, and the Spirits of Just Men made like unto, and as pure as them: and lastly forasmuch as whatever advantages there arise to these our *Corruptible, dishonourable, weak, and Natural Bodies*, by being raised, and glorify'd in *Incorruption, in Honour, in Power, and Spirituality*, are pleasures, and advantages truly, that the Mind of Man cannot apprehend any so agreeable to the dignity of our Constitutions; and as touching the excellency of them, what they are in themselves; the highest strains of Humane Oratory can never represent, nor our loftiest imaginations mount unto.

But tho' *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor Heart conceived the things that God hath prepared for those that love him*, for those that by keeping *his Commandments, and the Faith of Jesus dye in Him*; yet as we
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can look upon them (*as thro' a Glass darkly*) at present, thus much we know in part, that their Bodies after the Resurrection will remain *as the brightness of the Firmament,* Ch. 12. *(as the Prophet Daniel assures us) and shine* ver. 3. *as the Stars for ever and ever.* And, as touching their Souls; *Before* that glorious manifestation of God's Power, and Promises in raising their corrupted Bodies from the Dust; we are assured they shall be with *Abraham* in Comfort, and with *Christ* in Paradise; and *After*, their *Minds* will be fill'd with as much *Light*, and their *Wills* with as much *Love*, as ever they are capable of; their *Faith* being heighten'd into an *Eternal Vision* of God, and thereby their *Hopes* and *Desires* swallowed up in the *fruition* of immutable Blifs.

And being assured of this, we need not trouble our selves with those vain Disputes of some Ages before us, concerning the separate State of Departed Souls; nor with the Idle Notions of those various *Limbus's*, whereinto some have fancied them to have been received: but having these Revelations it is matter of infinite Importance to us all, to use our utmost Endeavours after Purity, and Holiness, and a stedfast and lively Faith

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in Christ our Saviour ; that thereby we may be found among those that *Dye in the Lord*, who by the Voice from Heaven are declared *Blessed from henceforth*, or from the Moment of their Departure. So * several good Expositors understand those words, and our Church confirms the Interpretation, when She acknowledgeth to Almighty God, that *with him do live the Spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord ; and with him the Souls of the Faithful, after they are delivered from the burthen of the Flesh, are in Joy and Felicity.*

See Pool's
Synop. Crit.

For which Discovery of these Spiritual Joys, should I now offer to speak the due Praises of our Christian Religion, I know not when I should end the Panegyrick, or finish the Task ; as being those that eminently display its Excellency above all other Institutions whatever. The Gentiles, by the Light of Nature, could never reach them: The Jews of Old never had them in their written Law, unless in Types; and the Turks at present expect the quite contrary in their Sensual Paradise. And indeed, God intended these expresse Revelations of the Life to come, together with some Descriptions of the true Nature of its Bliss ; for the Business,

See Mahom.
Alcor. pag.
478. 489.
492. Eug.

ness, and the Glory of the Gospel, by which, and which alone, *Life Eternal in a Blessed Immortality is brought to light*: Yea, brought to Light for this very purpose, that all such as endeavour to *Dye in the Lord*, might in *their Labours* be encouraged with the Hopes of the Enjoyment of so great a *recompence of Reward*: For tho' the intrinsick Beauty of Holiness be very great, and excellent; yet thro' the Degeneracy of Mankind, that proving not a sufficient Allurement to the Exercise thereof, God in the Scriptures hath annexed his Promises to the Commands he hath given; and confirm'd those Promises by his Oath: that *by two immutable things* (as the Author to the *Hebrews* speaks) *in which it is impossible for God to lye, we might have a strong Consolation to lay hold upon the hope that is set before us*. And in like manner here, for our Consolation, He not only declares those Persons *Blessed that dye in Him*, but Emphatically confirms it by his *Yea*, in his own Name, and *by himself*; and by *greater* it could not be done.

Ch. 6.
ver. 18.

Which brings me to speak a word or two to the Declaration and Confirmation of both together, that thereby I may satisfy you of the full Assurance we have, that such

a Blessedness, as I have in some measure represented to you, shall be the Portion of those *that Dye in the Lord*.

Blessed then are the Dead that dye in the Lord, Yea saith the Spirit.

Touching the former part whereof, (*viz.*) the Declaration; The Voice that St. *John* heard from Heaven spake it unto him, Saying, *Blessed are the Dead that dye in the Lord*; which words he affirms he heard in a clear and articulate Sound, and therefore could not mistake it for any other than what it really was; as One we know to have been that came before to our *Blessed Saviour*, *Joh. 12.* which *some that stood by thought was thunder*, and others the speech of an Angel. And lest this Voice should be capable of any misconstruction as to its Author, and thereby the Authority of Him who utter'd it be any way question'd; It confirms to the World the Truth of what had been said with a *ῥαὶ λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα*: *Yea*, (or of a Truth) *saith the Spirit*. *τὸ πνεῦμα κατ' ἑξοχὴν*, *The Spirit* eminently above All; in himself an Author essentially Infallible; as being THE SPIRIT whose Knowledge extendeth to the true Nature of all things, and therefore not capable of being deceived Himself about the Matter;

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and

and whose Justice and Holiness is not inferior unto, but equally Infinite with His Knowledg, and his Wisdom; and therefore not capable of affirming what he knows to be false, and thereby of deceiving any other. As being THE SPIRIT who by His Omnipotent Power *call'd* the whole World into its Being out of Nothing, and therefore of Ability to dispose of those Mansions he himself has made. And lastly, as being THE SPIRIT whose Goodness is equal to, nay, if his Divine Attributes would admit degrees, I should say greater than Omnipotence itself; since the first Characters of his Glorious Name are *The Lord God, merciful and gracious, keeping Mercy for Thousands*; and therefore as he delights to manifest himself, by nothing so much as Acts of Beneficence; so will he more especially make himself known, by fulfilling his Declarations and Promises, in receiving those *that Dye in him* into a Rest from their Labours, and an everlasting Reward of their good Works. And now if in Matters of far less Evidence, a meer *αὐτὸς ἔφη*, *So saith the Philosopher*, was thought a sufficient ground for Heathen's Satisfaction; certainly in Matters of so great moment, and such agreeableness to our Na-
tures,

Exod.
34. 6, 7.

tures, a λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα, *So saith the Spirit*, ought to be a sufficient foundation for a Christian's Faith.

Wherefore instead of suspending our Belief, or doubting of God's *Veracity*, let us call to Mind the great Advantages *We* receive by those Declarations, Confirmations, and Promises HE hath given unto us to strengthen our Hopes, to comfort us in Affliction, and to encourage us in the Performance of good Works: and then, so much matter of Praise and Admiration will offer it self unto us, that we shall think we can never sufficiently bless and adore his *Goodness* towards us; for should *he* have left us to our selves without such Revelations, tho' we have natural Desires after Immortality, and Blessedness implanted us, yet our narrow-limited Knowledge could never have discovered unto us the Certainty of Heavenly Joys, to be possessed by the Righteous, who are said *to Dye in the Lord*. Under our heaviest Pressures, or amidst our greatest Troubles, we might, and should often have said indeed, *Blessed are the dead, for they rest from their labours*: But even in our highest Speculations, or our most exalted Raptures we could never have known, or said, that

Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, for their works follow them, that is, according to the Context, follow them in the presence of G O D, the *Lamb*, and the Holy Angels, and so instead of a *clear Assurance* of a *real Heaven* in Spiritual Joys, we might have been still led on as the Old Heathen World was, with the *blind hopes* of a *feign'd Elysium* in Shades and Groves. And therefore as long as we enjoy the Powers of Thinking by being Living Men, let us not forget this great and weighty Truth, that the *Voice from Heaven* for our Comfort and Salvation declared and confirmed by the Seal of G O D, that so we may not faint in our Travels, whilst we are labouring to *abound in the work of the Lord*, to obtain that Blessedness, that is the sure Reward prepared for those that *dye in Him*.

In a brief Application then of all. The Persons *that dye in the Lord*, are all those that depart this Life, having sincerely endeavoured to the end to keep the Commandments of G O D, upon their failure been truly Penitent, and by a lively Faith in C H R I S T committed themselves to his Mercy. And that there are incomprehensible Degrees of Blessedness in the Mansions Above, prepared for

for all such Persons ; I believe no well-dis-
 posed Reason of Man can after this remain
 unconvinced : and if he has any Faith in
 J E S U S, must, I am sure, be fully satisfied ;
 since that is the *Substance* of this Blessedness
hoped for in him, and *the evidence* of Joyful
things to come hereafter, and as yet *not seen*.
 Wherefore having this satisfaction by this
 Voice from Heaven, as also by many other
 Declarations of our Saviour and his Apostles
 (who all confirm'd the Truth of what they
 taught by frequent and unparallel'd Mi-
 racles.) Be the Labours, the Cares, the
 Crosses, the Persecutions and Afflictions of
 this Life never so numerous, or so grievous
 to Flesh and Blood ; let not the sense of such
 momentary Afflictions ever so far vex, or de-
 press our Souls, as to make us either murmur
 at G O D's Providence, or despair of his Mercy,
 or be unmindful of the *Eternal weight of*
Glory, whereinto *through much Tribulation*.
 we are foretold, we must expect to *enter* ; and
 where, the Angel proclaim'd, *is the patience*
of the Saints. Saints, who, tho' once were
sailing in these troubled *waters*, yet because
 they made not *Shipwreck* of a good Consci-
 ence, but by Faith bore themselves up from
sinking in the *Waves*, are now *arrived* at
 their

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AET. 14.
VER. 22.

their ever-quiet *Haven*: whose Number, (my Hope, yea Confidence is) the Soul of this our Deceased Brother has encreased; who in time of his Affliction, yea amidst his greatest Pains, submitted himself to God's Visitation with a wonderful Calmness, and Serenity of Spirit; much like unto His, who said, *Not my Will, O Father, but thine be done.* Who, having *purged his Conscience from dead and sinful Works, to serve the living God*, and thereby being filled with the well-grounded hopes of a blessed Immortality thro' Jesus Christ; Faced his approaching Hour with that truly Christian Fortitude, that he shew'd himself as Unconcern'd at the sense of its usual Terrours, as the Apostle did when he sang Triumphantly this *Epinicion*; *O Death where is thy Sting? O Grave where is thy Victory?*

- II. But Secondly, Since Labours and Afflictions by an unavoidable Necessity accompany all living; and since inconceivable Pleasures in an infinitely blessed State are the everlasting Portion of those *that Dye in the Lord*; Let us always remember the great Advantage they have by their Change, who *dye the Death of the Righteous*; and thence learn not over-much to lament our Loss by their Departure.

G O D

GOD, for many wise Reasons, more than
 the Wisest of us can discern, *takes the Righteous to himself from the Evil that is, and is to come*; and 'tis, or at least it should be our Prayer, that He would be pleas'd *shortly to accomplish the Number of his Elect, and hasten his Kingdome*: and therefore as well in submission to the unsearchable Methods of Divine Providence, as in compliance with other Christian Duties, we should check those Passions that are apt to exceed the Bounds allowable to natural Affection, whenever they arise to an high Degree upon the sense of our Loss by the Departure of our Friends. By Death they are freed from the Labours and Miseries of this World, and if *their last End were like his* whose Funeral we are now attending, they are Rejoycing in the Ease and Pleasures of the Other; and therefore tho' Lamentation and Mourning may plead very strongly for themselves upon this Occasion; when GOD has Deprived a most tenderly Affectionate *Wife of an Husband*, who never in any thing Contended with her, unless it were to exceed her in Kindness: When he has been pleas'd to take from a Family, a Father rather than a Brother; from the Neighbourhood, a Composer
 of

of their Differences, and a Guardian of their Rights; from the Poor, a Reliever of their Necessities; and from all his Acquaintance, from the highest to the lowest, an Affable, Courteous and True-hearted Friend; One, who was always an Enemy to PAGEANTRY, HYPOCRISY, and PRIDE; and, tho' abounding with this World's Good, could never by any One be charged (as the Prince of *Tyre* is by the Prophet) that his *Heart was lifted up because of his Riches*: 'Tho', I say, the sense of these Losses by so Worthy a Gentleman's Death (which I should more largely insist upon, were it not my Design to allay your Sorrows) may very strongly incline us over-much to Lament and Grieve; yet when in one Minute we look upon our selves, and his just Character, and Sigh upon the sense of our Loss; let us, in the Next, consider his happy State, and Comfort our selves upon the Thoughts of his infinite Gain: for should his Spirit return to us, he Himself would Advise us *not to Weep for him, but to Weep for our selves*, who now are in the midst of our *labours* whilst he *rests* from them, who now are *working*, whilst he is *rewarded*.

Eze. 28.
ver. 5.

Thirdly, and lastly, Since all those that *dye in the Lord* are Blest with Eternal Joys, that none can comprehend, but that GREAT GOD that gives them; and those Happy Souls, that by His Favour do now possess them: notwithstanding the wonderful and unspeakable Greatness of them, and their Eternity; Shall we ever be so seduc'd as by Apostacy from our Faith in CHRIST, and Obedience to His Precepts, to forfeit our Title to them, either for the hope of Temporal Profits, and Honours? or the sake of sensual Pleasures? or the Fear of worldly Afflictions? Alas! all Temporal Advantages, even the greatest of all earthly Felicities, had they a Sufficiency in themselves to satisfy our Desires; and could we be secure of their Duration, or Continuance with us; yet at best, can attend us no farther than this present Life, which is as *a vapour*, and *a Shadow*, and passeth away like *a tale that is told*. When we please our selves most in the Thoughts of enjoying them; God many times is pleas'd to interpose Himself, and cut us off: And *to say to our Souls, take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry*, because, as we think, *there is much goods laid up for many years*; is so sandy a foundation to

III.

Luke
12. 19.

E

build

build upon, that our *Lord* hath said, *Thou*
 Ver. 20. *Fool*, to him that doth it; *For this night*
our Souls may be required of us. Let us
 Phil. 3. therefore, *press towards the mark for the*
 14. *price of the high calling of God in Christ Je-*
sus, and set our affections on things above, and
 Col. 3. 2. *not on things on the earth*; always remem-
 Prov. bring the *Wise-man's Words*, that *Riches*
 11. 4. *profit not in the day of wrath, but Righte-*
ousness delivereth from death. And what-
 ever fair Offers, or Enticing promises of this
 World's Treasures be made, or given unto us,
 upon our compliance with sinful terms; As
 Heb. *Moses refus'd to be call'd the son of Pharaoh's*
 11. 24. *Daughter, because he had a respect unto the*
recompence of reward; so let us condemn the
 like Proposals, for the same reason, *choosing*
 Ver. 25. *rather (as he did) to suffer affliction with the*
people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of
sin for a season.

And indeed, as *the pleasures of sin* are but
for a season, or of a short continuance; so
 are they base in themselves, and end in bit-
 terness. Be they in appearance never so spe-
 cious, yet, (in the *Wise-man's Language*)
 Prov. *they bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder;*
 23. 32. *they lead down to the Chambers of Death, and*
 Ch. 7. *their way is the way to Hell.* Wherefore
 27. let

let us consider the dignity of our Nature, and the Excellency of our Religion, and let not brutish Sence lead U s so basely captive ; to whom G O D has given *Reason* to be our *Guide*, and of whom He now requires *Faith*, as our *Support* against Temptations, and our *Glory* in our Conquest of them : And that it may not, let us (following these Exhortations) mortify *our members that are upon* Col. 3. 5. *earth*, and (as the *Apostle* himself infers) *having these promises, let us cleanse our selves* 2 Cor. 7. 1. *from all filthineß of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holineß in the fear of God.* For as all our future, and everlasting Happiness proceedeth from the Vision of Him, so are we certain that without Holiness, no Man shall ever see Him.

And as thus we should be upon our guard, lest either the Hopes of this World's profits, and honours, or the enticements of its pleasures should so far prevail, as to seduce us out of those paths that lead to Blessedness ; so should we also, lest the fears of affliction should drive us from them. Wherefore rather than do *any ill Action*, let us suffer *every ill thing*, The Powers, and the Rage of this World can lay upon us ; reckoning, with the *Apostle*, *That the sufferings of this present life are not* Rom. 8. 18. *worthy*

worthy to be compar'd with the glory that shall be revealed in us. So shall we be prepar'd for all conditions of Life, and every thing that can beset us; and thereby approve our selves as true Sons of our CHURCH as this our Deceased Brother was; Whose Faith in JESUS, and Whose stedfastness to our Religion I need not tell many Persons here to have been truly such, as the changes of the World could never alter.

In the close of all; *Hold fast* (as He did) *the profession of your faith without wavering,*
 Heb. 10 22. *for he is faithful that has promised; and be ye*
 1 Cor. 15. 58. *stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the*
work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that
your labour will not be in vain in the Lord.
 For since He, who 'tis impossible should act any thing in vain, or be disappointed of His Ends, did condescend to a most painful, and shameful Death, that all such as *dye in the Lord*, might be advanc'd to an Everlasting Life of Pleasure and Glory, Certainly *when he had overcome the sharpness of that Death,* He opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers. And Now,

To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Three Persons and One God, be ascribed all Dominion, Power, and Glory, both now, and for ever. Amen.

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